

IS THE UK TORTURE INQUIRY AN ATTEMPT TO LIMIT FURTHER DISCLOSURE?

There's not yet a lot of reporting about the terms of the British inquiry into its complicity with torture. But from the reports by the Beeb and the Independent, it seems the inquiry itself will not start until all pending civil and criminal complaints about torture are completed – and the government is helpfully offering to serve as mediator to speed their completion this year. From the Beeb:

The prime minister promised compensation for victims if it was found foreign agents had committed abuses with UK counterparts colluding.

Mr Cameron told MPs that to ignore the claims would risk operatives' reputation "being tarnished".

On-going criminal and civil cases must end before the inquiry starts, he said.

[snip]

He indicated the government was ready to provide mediation to people pursuing civil cases in relation to their detention in the US-run Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

This appears to put pressure on people like Binyam Mohamed to agree to mediation (between whom? between the US and him, mediated by David Cameron's selected mediator?) if he wants to see a more generalized inquiry move forward. And of course, that generalized inquiry would be led by the British government's hand-picked judge – Sir Peter Gibson – and the promises to complete access to the relevant documentation would be nothing more than promises until Mohamed agrees

to settle.

Furthermore, at least in this early reporting, there's no discussion of the terms of the inquiry: will it be limited to whether or not the UK asked people to torture, or whether – as Craig Murray has shown – the government knowingly accepted intelligence collected using torture in the name of gathering intelligence per se?